

LAND

SEA

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SPACE



SAFE News

SAFE Association - Our 70th Year

VOLUME 28 | NUMBER 2 | SPRING 2025



**Flying in the Face of
Fear: Courageous
Leadership,
Teamwork, and
Survival by Design**



KIM CAMPBELL

DEDICATED TO ENSURING PERSONAL SAFETY AND PROTECTION IN LAND, SEA, AIR, AND SPACE ENVIRONMENTS

Features

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On the Front Cover

SAFE Symposium Keynote Speaker 2025, Colonel (Ret.) Kim "KC" Campbell speaks on Flying in the Face of Fear: Courageous Leadership, Teamwork, & Survival by Design



On the Back Cover

Dragon Crew-9 returns from Space and the International Space Station with formerly stranded astronauts after their Starliner Test Flight in June 2024



QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ABOUT THE SAFE NEWSLETTER?

Contact the Information Management Team:
info-mgt@safassociation.com

Follow us on Social Media



President's Message

By Steve Bromley | SAFE Association President

As we continue into 2025, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the current landscape of our industry and the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for our Association.

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to each and every one of you for your continued support and dedication to the SAFE Association. Your passion and commitment to our mission are what drive us forward, and I am honored to serve as your President.

As we navigate the complexities of our industry, we are faced with both opportunities and challenges. One of the key challenges we are currently addressing is the impact of government restrictions on travel, tradeshow, and events such as our symposium. These restrictions, should they continue, may affect not only our ability to connect in person but also our capacity to showcase the latest innovations and advancements in our field.

In response to these challenges, the Board of Directors are exploring alternative solutions, should they be required, to facilitate connection and knowledge-sharing among our members. We will closely watch each convention and tradeshow as the year progresses and work diligently to adapt to any changes we witness to ensure another productive and successful SAFE Symposium this November in Mobile.

Furthermore, we are actively engaging with government officials and industry leaders to advocate for the importance of tradeshow and events in driving innovation and progress in our field.

On a more positive note, I am excited to announce that our Association continues moving forward with several initiatives aimed at enhancing member benefits and supporting the growth of our community. These initiatives include:

- The launch of our new website is growing ever nearer.
- The initiation of our professional development programs, such as our new Fellows program.

As always, I invite you to get involved and help shape the future of our Association, especially if you enjoy web building/managing and similar. Whether you're interested in volunteering for a committee, participating in a working group, or simply providing feedback on our initiatives, your input is invaluable to us.

Thank you again for your continued support. I look forward to connecting with you throughout the year and exploring the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

SYMPOSIUM 2025

Mobile, Alabama
4 – 6 Nov 2025

Ticket Sales

Open Now! [Register Here](#)

More details on pricing and options for various groups found on page 5.

Exhibitor Booths

10x10 Spaces are open, 2 attendee tickets with each 10x10 space.

More details on pricing and options based on type of group found on page 5.

Hotel Booking Links

It is important to us that you book through the Hotels we have coordinated with to give you the best experience both in price and safety. Find the links to our Hotel Booking on page 5.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Look at your opportunities to Sponsor at the Symposium by looking at more information found on our [Registration Site](#).



VICTORY STRATEGIES

Keynote:

Flying in the Face of Fear: Courageous Leadership, Teamwork, and Survival by Design

In this gripping keynote, Kim "KC" Campbell draws from an extraordinary combat experience where her very survival depended on her aircraft and the people who maintained it. Through this experience she reveals how courage has the power to transform both leaders and teams—whether you're navigating everyday challenges or high-stakes situations. She will take you inside the cockpit of her A-10 Warthog during a harrowing mission when her aircraft was struck by enemy fire. Through this life-changing—and admittedly terrifying—experience, Kim shares why courageous leadership and teamwork are essential for elevating performance.

Leveraging her extensive experience as a fighter pilot and senior military leader, Kim unveils powerful insights into the mindset and culture that enable fighter pilots to sustain peak performance and make decisive choices under pressure. She shares the value of creating a "wingman culture"—where trust, collaboration, and mutual support are essential to fostering high-performance teams. Packed with actionable strategies from the cockpit, this keynote invites you to explore a unique perspective on leading with courage and fostering resilience, equipping you to inspire bold action and elevate performance.



Colonel Kim "KC" Campbell, USAF Retired

Kim "KC" Campbell is a retired Colonel who served in the United States Air Force for over 24 years as a fighter pilot and senior military leader. She has flown 1,800 hours in the A-10 Warthog, including more than 100 combat missions protecting troops on the ground in both Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2003, Kim was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for Heroism after successfully recovering her battle-damaged airplane after an intense close air support mission.

As a senior military leader, Kim has led hundreds of airmen both at home and abroad in deployed locations and enabled them to succeed in their missions. She has experience leading complex organizations and driving cultural change. Kim knows what it takes to be a successful leader, to inspire and empower high-performing teams to achieve success.

Kim is a distinguished graduate of the United States Air Force Academy. As a Marshall Scholar, she earned an MBA from the University of London and a Master of Arts in International Security Studies from the University of Reading in England.

Kim's Air Force assignments include leadership roles as a Group Commander, responsible for over 1,000 Air Force personnel in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. She also served as the Military Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, advising the number three civilian official in the Department of Defense on national security and defense policy formulation. Kim has also served as the Air Force Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, a pre-eminent think tank promoting international leadership and engagement. Most recently, she served as the Director of the Center for Character and Leadership Development at the Air Force Academy.

Kim is now a keynote speaker and executive coach with Victory Strategies, a leadership development and coaching firm. She is the author of the bestselling book, *Flying in the Face of Fear: A Fighter Pilot's Lessons on Leading with Courage*.

Online registration for Attendees, Exhibitors & Sponsorships

[CLICK HERE TO BUY TICKETS](#)

What is included in my 3 day ticket?

Every attendee ticket (including booth personnel) will include the following:

- Full access to the Symposium for all 3 days
- Access to the exhibit hall and all the exhibitor booths
- Complimentary catered buffet lunch each day
- Complimentary tea & coffee facilities throughout the day
- Access to all technical paper presentations and briefings
- Symposium evening reception which includes food and beverage service
- Access to register for all SAFE co-locating groups

SAFE SYMPOSIUM HOTELS & ROOM RATES
Cut Off for Below Pricing 5 Oct 2025

Battle House Renaissance Hotel
Reservation Links Below

[GOV'T/MILITARY BLOCK 2025](#) - \$114/night
[SAFE INDUSTRY BLOCK 2025](#) - \$136/night

Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel
Reservation Links

[GOV'T/MILITARY BLOCK 2025](#) - \$114/night
[SAFE INDUSTRY BLOCK 2025](#) - \$136/night

**SAFE MEMBERS WILL BE EMAILED DISCOUNT CODES TO
RECEIVE THEIR REDUCED RATE**

ATTENDEE TICKETS

Industry - 3 day ticket

- Before 21st September
Members = \$650
Non-Members = \$750
- After 21st September
Members = \$700
Non-Members = \$900

Military - 3 day ticket

(for active duty service members* see pg 9)

- Before 21st September = \$270
- After 21st September = \$295

Student - 3 day ticket

(must provide valid student ID)

- Before 21st September = \$270
- After 21st September = \$295

Spouse - 3 day ticket

- Before 21st September = \$270

One Day Pass

- \$220 per day

EXHIBITOR BOOTHS

With each 10x10 booth space that you book, you will receive x2 complimentary attendee tickets.

When purchasing your booth, you will be prompted to provide the names of the x2 individuals who will be claiming these.

NOTE:

- Only those names that are provided as above when buying a booth receive a ticket.
- No end cap booths

SAFE Corporate Member

- Per 10x10 booth space = \$3,285

Industry Non-Member

- Per 10x10 booth space = \$4,285

Government/University

- Per 10x10 booth space = \$1,300

ANNUAL SAFE AWARDS – CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

By Jean Fontenot | Awards Committee Chair

ATTENTION: All Members of SAFE - Government, Military, Corporate, Academic, and Individual Members,

This is the opportunity to recognize the achievements of your colleagues by nominating them for a prestigious SAFE award! If you don't take the time to recognize them, who will?

Since SAFE was founded 50+ years ago, one of our key goals has been to provide an opportunity for participants in our field to be formally recognized for their contributions. Each year the SAFE Board of Directors announces the recipients of our industry recognition at our annual Symposium.

The SAFE Association Awards Committee is now accepting nominations for the following awards, and we need you to help us identify deserving candidates. We invite you to review the criteria for each award and nominate a worthy colleague or team.

All nominations should be submitted by close of business July 17, 2025.

Nominations will follow the guidelines provided on the SAFE Association website, see <https://safeassociation.com/>.

Once received, the Board of Directors will evaluate each nomination based on relevance to the award criteria and the details of the supporting information provided in the submission. This ensures the awards go to the most deserving recipients.

To identify the most deserving recipients, we need your nominations! We all know of individuals across our industry with significant accomplishments over the past year or their entire career. Project and Program Teams that have made recent major contributions are also prevalent in the military, in new product development, contract service providers, and academic research communities.

The Award categories are:

MICHAEL R. GROST CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Recognizes the career of a deserving individual for their significant contributions to the field of safety or survival.

GENERAL SPRUANCE INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Honors an individual who has made a recent outstanding contribution in the safety field through leadership toward or significant advancement of, safety and survival improvements. This contribution can be made through education, knowledge, science, application of investigative techniques, or engineering.

TEAM ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Acknowledges the recent accomplishments of a team in the field of safety or survival through an advancement in education, knowledge, science, application of investigative techniques, or engineering associated with a significant improvement in safety or survival.

MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Is presented to the person or persons, civilian or military, who have demonstrated a recent outstanding contribution to the preservation of human life through an action of courage.

MURRAY P. KOCH INDUSTRY AWARD

Distinguishes a member of industry who has made recent significant contributions in the advancement of technology or hardware for safety and survival applications.

CONTINUED...PAGE 7

ANNUAL SAFE AWARDS – CALL FOR NOMINATIONS, Cont...

We encourage you to reflect upon a person or team who is deserving of recognition by the industry we serve. Take the time now to write up a nomination and submit it to SAFE as soon as possible but no later than July 17, 2025.

Go to <https://safeassociation.com/>, click on the AWARDS tab and access the nomination form. Complete the form and submit it either through the website, via fax, or mail to the SAFE Association.

Specific criteria for each award can be found on our website.

The person or team being nominated can be either a current Member or Non-Member. However, all nominations must be submitted by a current SAFE member.

Recognizing our deserving colleagues is an important way for us to acknowledge their career achievements and set the bar for our younger colleagues. Again, the deadline for submissions is close of business on July 17, 2025.

The SAFE website will open for nomination submissions on April 11, 2025. For other questions please email the SAFE Administrator at:

admin@safeassociation.com or call:

(541) 895-3012.

SAFE ASSOCIATION AWARDS COMMITTEE

SAFE ASSOCIATE FELLOWS APPLICATION PROCEDURES

By Kevin Divers | Association Development Chair

Members in the next few months we will be solidifying our first slate of SAFE Association Fellows. This new membership category recognizes Senior leaders in the industry and government that have years of work and success in the preservation of human life through design, application, and education within their various fields. With that a step to becoming a SAFE Fellow will be supported by creating a SAFE Associate Fellows Group that works towards various tasks, achievements, and participation that support the SAFE Association and that members growth in their field.

These invitations will come out to members with five consecutive years membership in the Association. So, make sure to maintain your membership as well as square away that you are properly listed as a member for those who may be one of their companies' listed members through the corporate membership of their company.

The SAFE Fellows will be a major part of building the process in which one is selected as an Associate Fellow and progress to be nominated for Fellow. Look forward to more news and solidification of the process.



Election 2025 – Call for Nominations

By Ebby Bryce | Nominations Committee Chair

The SAFE Association was built, has thrived, and been sustained by the dedication and volunteerism of our members. Stepping up, pitching in, and collaborating with other like-minded volunteers to carry out the Associations goals and objectives is the engine that continues to drive SAFE's success. Each year a new Board comes together to build on the lessons learned and accomplishments of the Board that came before it.

The process for fielding Candidates for the Membership to consider and elect as Officers to the SAFE Association Board of Directors is an annual requirement under the Constitution and By Laws. Nominations for elected board positions are due to the Nominations Committee not later than July 1, 2025. Our goal is to have a vetted and Board-approved slate of Nominees no later than Friday, July 11, 2025. This targeted end date would ensure adequate time for the preparation of the on-line ballot and voting process. The results will then be presented at the last Board meeting before the 2025 Symposium in November. The 2025 SAFE Association election is set to open on August 1, 2025, and end on September 1, 2025.

Candidates are being sought for the following elected board positions:

- **President-Elect** – Pre-requisite: Eligibility for nomination and election to the office of President-Elect shall require two years of continuous active membership in the Association and a minimum of one term as an elected or appointed member of the Board. The President-Elect shall ascend to the office of President upon the close of the 2026 SAFE Symposium. In the interim, the President-Elect shall be a member of the Board and performs such duties as delegated by the sitting President. Additionally, the President-Elect shall familiarize themselves with the duties of the office of President. In the event both the President and Vice President are incapacitated or otherwise unable to act, the President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President during the period of such incapacity or inability to act.
- **Vice President** – No Pre-requisite. The Vice President shall be a member of the Board. The Vice President will familiarize themselves with the activities and duties of the President and will act as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee. If the President is not available to officiate, the Vice President will act during the vacancy. In the event the President shall become permanently unable to perform the duties of the office, the Vice President shall become the acting President.
- **Secretary** – No Pre-requisite. The Secretary shall assist the Association Administrator or other Board member as directed in accordance with the procedures established by the Constitution and Bylaws, and shall assure the written record of the association is maintained and available to the members.
- **Treasurer** – No Pre-requisite. The Treasurer shall oversee the Association's financial records in accordance with the procedures established by the Constitution and Bylaws and shall assure the issuance of at least one financial statement annually.

To be approved, each Candidate must be a current member in good standing to run for office.

We encourage you to consider volunteering your talents to be a Candidate by stepping up and pitching in with your creative, thoughtful and collaborative energies. Your participation clearly helps further the viability of the SAFE Association in its role of supporting, protecting and saving the lives of those who intentionally go out into harm's way.

CONTINUED...PAGE 9

Election 2025 – Call for Nominations, Cont...

SAFE members who have any interest in pursuing an elected office, questions regarding the nominations process, or any other matter pertaining to the elections, please contact the **SAFE Administrator, Stacy DeLoach Stuber** at admin@safeassociation.com or one of the following Nominations Committee members:

Ebby D. Bryce – Committee Chair

Email: ebryce@ced.us.com

Mobile: (757) 927-2461

Nicole Stefanoni – Committee Member

Email: nicole@lifesupportintl.com

Mobile: (215) 385-4345

Kevin Divers – Committee Member

Email: kevindiver@gmail.com

Mobile: (615) 681-2539



The Nominations Committee thanks you in advance.



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DEDICATED TO ENSURING PERSONAL SAFETY AND PROTECTION IN LAND, SEA, AIR, AND SPACE ENVIRONMENTS



SAFE ASSOCIATION AL LOVING SCHOLARSHIP

Waldorf University is pleased to offer the annual Al Loving Scholarship in partnership with SAFE Association. This scholarship will be presented to one individual who demonstrates a passion for education and development, support of the SAFE Association and its affiliates/members, and the desire to achieve their educational goals.

The scholarship will cover up to 60 credit hours toward one online degree program at Waldorf University. It will be applied directly to the recipient's tuition for up to 36 consecutive months or until the completion of the selected online degree program, whichever comes first. Applications will be accepted from October 1 through December 31.

SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

- // Waldorf will grant one scholarship to one member or volunteer of the SAFE Association.
- // Scholarship applicants must have a high school transcript or equivalent (GED).
- // Scholarship applicants must be able to maintain continuous enrollment in his or her degree program.
- // Capable of maintaining a minimum 2.0 undergraduate GPA and 3.0 graduate GPA.
- // Recipient must enroll within ninety days from the date of the award notification.
- // Must have a current application for admission to Waldorf University on file or be a current student (visit waldorf.edu/apply and select "online programs").
- // Applicants must provide verification for eligibility (acceptable verification documents include proof of membership to SAFE or a recommendation letter from a SAFE Member or Associate).

"My overall goal is to better my city. I loved my experience at Waldorf University, the faculty members were always there to help and answer any questions. I'd like to tell Waldorf thank you for an excellent education."

—Jamie Xayavong, MA in Organizational Leadership 2023

Learn more:

- ✉ scholarships@waldorf.edu
- 📞 877.267.2157
- 🌐 waldorf.edu/online-scholarships

Apply today:



SAFE 2025 Call for Presentations

By Glenn Paskoff | Science and Technology Committee Chair

The SAFE Association's Annual Symposium is the premier international showcase for unparalleled discovery including technical sessions, extensive exhibits, product demonstrations, workshops, technical debates, panel sessions, and networking opportunities. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Accident Investigation
- Aviation Escape Systems
- Biodynamics and Physiology
- Occupant Crash Protection
- Directed Energy Protection
- Energetic Materials
- Extreme Environments
- Ground Vehicle Protection
- Hearing Protection
- Speech Intelligibility
- Human Factors
- Individual Flight Equipment
- Life Support Systems
- Modeling and Simulation
- Helmet Systems
- NBC Protection/CBRN PPE
- Ocular and Night Vision Systems
- Parachute Systems
- Oxygen Systems/PBE
- Personnel Recovery
- Search and Rescue
- SOF Equipment
- Survival Equipment and Aids
- Test and Evaluation
- Technology Transfer
- Training and Simulation
- Troop Protection
- Anthropometry

Briefings, Panels (consisting of 2 or more Briefings), Demonstrations & Workshops (specify). Submit a no-more-than 300-word abstract (electronically using the online abstract submission portal) to the SAFE Office through the SAFE website at www.safeassociation.com. Abstracts should be typed in 9pt Verdana font. A template is available for download on the website.

Abstracts must be submitted electronically using the entry form through the SAFE website, rather than via e-mail to the organization. Once submitted, a compiled abstract, as described above, is generated and e-mailed to the main (first) author and automatically forwarded for consideration to the symposium.

Technical Presentation abstracts should include Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections.

Panels, Briefings, Demonstrations, and Workshops should contain a paragraph outlining the safety issue to be presented, followed by a description of the program or product and how it is used to address the issue.

Panel sessions should outline the topic or scope, number of presenters by name and affiliation, and the panel chair. When planning a panel, bear in mind that session blocks are generally around 90 minutes. Panel sessions may list "tentative" speakers or papers for acceptance, but these must be finalized before the deadline.

You will be notified when your submission is accepted, rejected, or if revisions are required for acceptance. If your submission is rejected, you may resubmit with corrections and/or changes. Your presentation will be scheduled based on the type of paper and content.

AUDIO-VISUAL PRESENTATIONS

Presenters are to bring their presentation, formatted in MS PowerPoint (wide-screen 16:9 is preferred), electronically saved on appropriate media (memory stick, CD, etc.) directly to their session at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled start. The program allocates time between sessions to accommodate uploading the session's presentations to available presentation equipment immediately before the start. Each presentation will be allotted a total of 25 minutes (20 minutes for presentation time followed by 5 minutes of Q&A). If presentation time exceeds 20 minutes, Q&A time will also be shortened to account for the time difference. Moderators will work to ensure sessions begin and end at the appropriate time.

All authors are required to attend the Author's Briefing to meet and coordinate with the symposium Technical Team, the session moderator, and session co-presenters. Any technical issues or needs will be addressed at that time.

The following presentation equipment will be available for all technical sessions: a laptop computer, projector, and screen with lectern and microphone as well as a LASER pointer.

SAFE Association Chapters

DFW
METRO
CHAPTER



President: Lizanne Luchetti
E-mail: lizanne.luchetti@serastarsystems.com

WRIGHT
BROTHERS
CHAPTER



President: Ken Robinson
E-Mail: kenrobinsoniii@gmail.com

DOWN
UNDER
CHAPTER



President: Steve Madaras
E-mail: smadaras@aeropartsaustralia.com.au

ROCKY
MOUNTAIN
CHAPTER



President: Kassidy Carson
E-mail: kassidy.carson@collins.com

GRAND
CANYON
CHAPTER



President: Jenn Nikopoulos
E-mail: jenn.nikopoulos@taskaero.com

PACIFIC
RIM
CHAPTER



President: Dr. Robert Yonover
E-mail: seerescue@juno.com

EAST
COAST
CHAPTER



President: Dave DeSimone
E-Mail: desimoneassoc@me.com

ROCKET
CITY
CHAPTER



President: VACANT
E-Mail: If you would like to take
the role of President contact
plagaia@gmail.com

SAFE
EUROPE



Chair: Peter Marston
E-mail: pmarston@martin-baker.co.uk

MIDDLE
EAST
CHAPTER



President: Mohanad Alakai
E-mail: mohanad.al.akal@hotmail.com

CHAPTER
ONE –
SO-CAL



President: Jim Shaw
E-Mail: jim.shaw@dtswweb.com

Reminder to All SAFE Members:

It is important that the SAFE Association has your current contact information so we can contact you and distribute SAFE products, such as the Newsletter. Periodically, please go to the “Member Login” at the top, right corner of the SAFE Association web page. When the SAFE Directory appears, click on “**Update Your Profile**” at the top, left. Please review your personal information and, update anything needs to be changed, and click on “**Save Profile**” at the bottom of the page. Your efforts are much appreciated!!

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER: Distinguished Oyster Award



The SAFE Rocky Mountain Chapter would like to congratulate our second annual *Distinguished Oyster Award* winner and finalists!

2024 Winner: Dan Tribble

2024 Finalists: Brad Mastrolia, Brett Miller

Award Description:

The SAFE Rocky Mountain Chapter "Distinguished Oyster Award" recognizes an individual from industry or academia, active or retired, who has taken on and solved a unique challenge related to the preservation of human life. Candidates demonstrate determination, perseverance, innovation, and leadership to overcome a challenge or problem that was previously not well understood or thought to be impractical to tackle.

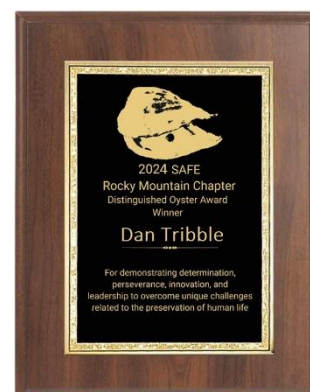
Award Candidates:

Any person who meets the criteria of the award may be nominated by an active SAFE member. SAFE and/or RMC membership is not required of the nominee. Residence within the Rocky Mountain Chapter region (CO, ID, MT, NE, UT, WY) is not required, but it is preferred. Distinguished Oyster's show grit and are able to polish a grain of sand into a true pearl!

Please keep in mind worthy candidates throughout the year and submit your nominees to the Rocky Mountain Chapter. The award nomination form is available upon request.



Pictured: Dan Tribble, 2024 Winner



UPCOMING SAFE BOARD MEETING

MEETING	DATE	LOCATION
SAFE BoD 3 rd Qtr Meeting (FY25)	7 May 2025 Wednesday 9am – 5pm	Virtual Meeting

If you wish to attend virtually, feel free to contact the SAFE Association Administrator, Stacy Stuber (admin@safeassociation.com for details)

NEXT SYMPOSIUM

MEETING	DATE	LOCATION
63 rd Annual Symposium	November 4–6, 2025	Mobile, AL

FUTURE SYMPOSIA

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
64 th Annual Symposium	November 3 – 5, 2026	Mobile, Alabama
65 th Annual Symposium	October 26 – 28, 2027	Reno, Nevada
66 th Annual Symposium	November 7 – 9, 2028	Reno, Nevada

Chapter News, Cont...

SAFE Rocky Mountain Chapter – Second Annual Social at the SAFE Symposium

The SAFE Rocky Mountain Chapter held its second annual social and in-person chapter meeting on 23-Oct-2024 in Virginia Beach, near the SAFE Symposium.

Much like many other chapters, Rocky Mountain Chapter members are geographically dispersed, comprising U.S. members from the states of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, and Nebraska.



The SAFE Symposium provided a unique opportunity for many chapter members, and all chapter officers, to come together in one place. Other chapter events and meetings are held virtually, but the chapter plans to make the social, planned proximal to the symposium, an annual occurrence.



Pictured: SAFE Rocky Mountain Chapter Members and Officers

(left to right, Eric Upchurch, Dwane Chrisco, JD Cain, Rodney Ward, Chris Sanchirico - VP, Kassidy Carson - President, John Hampton, Doug Nelson - Secretary, Matt Salois, Blake Thornton, Matt Hartman, Beau Gordon, Rob Makros, Rich Fishburn)

SAFE Journal

By Dr. Camille Bilger, 2025 Journal and Editorial Committee Chair

The SAFE Association Journal accepts Manuscript Submissions all year round!

We accept:

- Original research articles
- Literature reviews
- Technical reports (example shown below)
- Short Communications/ Case studies (~4 pages)
- For example: acquisitions need or operationally observed challenges)
- Letter to the Editor: a short form of communication, to comment objectively on a previously published article.

Get writing! So that our community can benefit from your knowledge, your experience, your expertise; to make a difference for our servicemen and servicewomen.

Get your work published!

The process for manuscript submission and publication is comparable to any other international peer-reviewed journal. A Guide to Authors will take you through the submission and publication processes. Please email me at Editor@safeassociation.com for further information.



Human Factors Activities Elsewhere

- The next DoD Human Factors Engineering Technical Advisory Group (DOD HFE TAG) meeting (previously scheduled for 12-14 May 2025) has been postponed due to restrictions on government travel.....Stay tuned!
- Mr. Chris DeLuca (OUSDRE Director of Systems Engineering) met with a small group of industry society representatives in February to discuss cooperation on developing and revising human factors and Human Systems Integration (HSI) requirements. This should result in much improved coordination of DoD and industry requirements.
- The SAE International, G-45 Human Systems Integration committee is currently revising its standard (SAE1008) on Force Protection and Survivability. SAE is seeking assistance from survivability subject matter experts. Please contact Steve Merriman if interested.
- The Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES) and SAE International have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to coordinate activities related to human factors and HSI standards, and have held an initial meeting to identify initial shared activities.
- The Foundation for Professional Ergonomics (FPE) has updated the Ergonomics Assessment Toolkit. The Toolkit is an online guide to 26 free tools which can help practitioners assess the risk of work-related musculoskeletal disorders. Please click this link for more information: [Updated Ergonomics Assessment Toolkit - Foundation for Professional Ergonomics - Home](#).
- The Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA) will hold its annual meeting in Atlanta, GA on 01-06 June 2025. ([AsMA | Aerospace Medical Association](#))

NOTE: Things tend to change frequently, so please double-check all these items prior to publication to ensure they are still accurate.



**SAFE Association
63rd Annual
Symposium**
Mobile, Alabama

November 4 -
November 6, 2025

The Current State of the Aerospace & Defense M&A Market in 2025

By Meghan Welch | Managing Director | Brown Gibbons Lang & Company

The Current State of Aerospace & Defense Mergers and Acquisitions Market in 2025

The Aerospace and Defense (A&D) mergers and acquisitions (M&A) market has experienced a surge in activity over the past several years, driven by global geopolitical tensions, increased defense spending, and the prioritization of technological advancements. As governments worldwide bolster their defense budgets to address emerging threats and modernize military capabilities, companies operating in this sector have become prime targets for strategic acquisitions. Additionally, commercial aviation and rotorcraft markets are also experiencing a resurgence in M&A interest following the COVID “black swan event” as industry players look to capitalize on post-pandemic recovery, technological advancements, strong demand fundamentals for Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (“MRO”) services and a growing demand for efficient, next-generation aircraft. Notably across both Aerospace and Defense has been a key focus on the pursuit of businesses with highly engineered, proprietary content critical to key aircraft platforms or enhance the survivability and mission effectiveness.

Increased Global Defense Spending as a Key Catalyst

One of the primary drivers of M&A activity in the A&D sector is the significant increase in global defense spending. Nations such as the United States, NATO allies, and Indo-Pacific countries are investing heavily in next-generation capabilities, including missile defense, cybersecurity, electronic warfare, and space-based defense systems. This elevated spending has prompted defense contractors to pursue acquisitions that align with these high-growth areas, consolidating assets to achieve scale, synergies, and technological superiority.

Prioritization of Highly Engineered, Proprietary Content

Buyers in the A&D sector are increasingly focused on acquiring companies with proprietary intellectual property and highly engineered solutions. These assets provide long-term competitive advantages, strong contract positions, and higher barriers to entry, making them particularly attractive in an industry where differentiation is critical. In defense, companies specializing in radar systems, precision-guided munitions, mission-critical or flight critical components, communications, hypersonic technology, and electronic warfare solutions are particularly sought after due to their strategic importance in modern combat scenarios. Furthermore, businesses with long-term production contracts and sole-source supplier status to major defense programs command premium valuations in the current market environment.

Focus on Survivability and Mission-Critical Capabilities

Another prominent theme in A&D M&A is the growing emphasis on survivability and mission-critical capabilities. With the evolving nature of warfare and the increasing sophistication of adversarial threats, defense contractors are actively seeking companies that enhance force protection, counter-drone technology, electronic countermeasures, and battlefield resilience. These assets are particularly valuable in contested environments where survivability can dictate mission success. The recent trend of acquisitions targeting firms specializing in stealth technologies, active protection systems, and secure communications underscores this priority.

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Current State of the Aerospace & Defense M&A , Cont...

M&A Opportunities in Commercial Aviation

The commercial aviation sector is also seeing renewed M&A interest as airlines and aircraft manufacturers seek to modernize fleets and improve operational efficiency. Post-pandemic recovery, sustainability initiatives, and increasing passenger demand have driven investments in next-generation aircraft, fuel efficiency technologies, and advanced avionics. Companies specializing in aerostructures, composite materials, and digital flight solutions have become attractive targets for acquisition as the industry shifts toward more fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly aircraft.

Rotorcraft and Helicopter Market Consolidation

The rotorcraft and helicopter segment is undergoing significant consolidation as defense and commercial operators seek to modernize fleets and expand capabilities. Increased demand for vertical lift aircraft in both military and civilian applications, including emergency medical services, law enforcement, and offshore energy transportation, has driven M&A activity. Companies with proprietary rotorcraft technologies, lightweight materials, and advanced avionics systems are being actively pursued by major aerospace players looking to enhance their vertical lift portfolios.

Strong Demand for Commercial Aerospace M&A

As Boeing and Airbus work to normalize supply chains and ramp up production, the commercial aerospace sector is experiencing heightened M&A interest. With record-breaking order backlogs, major aircraft manufacturers are prioritizing the stabilization of their supplier ecosystems, presenting opportunities for consolidation within the supply chain. Companies specializing in aerostructures, components, and high-value subsystems are becoming prime acquisition targets as OEMs seek to mitigate risks associated with production delays and enhance manufacturing efficiencies. The continued operation of aged fleets is also driving significant M&A activity in the maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) and aftermarket segments. Airlines are extending the life cycles of their existing aircraft due to high replacement costs and supply chain constraints on new deliveries. As a result, MRO providers, spare parts suppliers, and component repair companies are seeing increased demand, making them attractive targets for both strategic buyers and private equity investors looking to capitalize on long-term aftermarket growth. Moreover, supply chain consolidation remains a focal point for aerospace M&A as companies look to secure reliable access to critical materials and reduce production bottlenecks. Vertical integration strategies are being pursued by aerospace primes and Tier-1 suppliers to enhance supply chain resiliency and mitigate reliance on third-party vendors. This trend is expected to persist as the industry continues its post-pandemic recovery and positions itself for sustained production increases in the coming years.

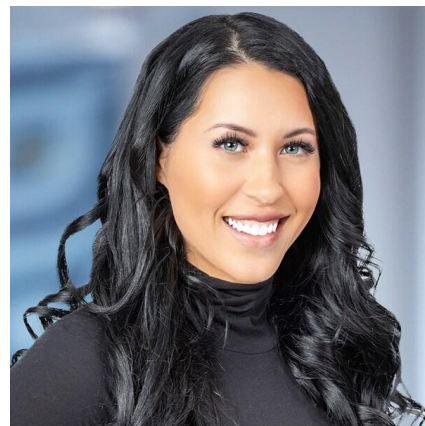
Industry Consolidation and the Role of Private Equity

The A&D sector is witnessing continued consolidation as both strategic buyers and private equity investors seek to capitalize on growth opportunities. Large defense primes are rationalizing their portfolios, divesting non-core assets while simultaneously acquiring high value, differentiated capabilities. Meanwhile, private equity firms, recognizing the stability and long-term government funding inherent in the defense sector, have been aggressively deploying capital to acquire and consolidate middle-market defense suppliers. This consolidation trend is expected to persist, driven by the need to streamline supply chains, improve operational efficiency, and position companies for sustained growth in an evolving defense landscape.

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Current State of the Aerospace & Defense M&A , Cont...

The A&D M&A market remains highly active, fueled by increased global defense spending, the demand for highly-engineered, proprietary content, and the focus on survivability and mission-critical solutions. In addition, opportunities in commercial aviation and the rotorcraft segment are expanding as industry players look to modernize and capitalize on technological advancements. As geopolitical tensions continue to shape defense priorities, strategic buyers and financial investors alike will pursue opportunities to strengthen their market positions through acquisitions. The ongoing consolidation of defense assets underscores the industry's commitment to innovation, efficiency, and enhanced capabilities, ensuring that M&A activity remains a pivotal strategy for growth in the A&D sector.



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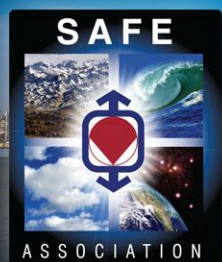
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Information Management

By Lauren Divers | Chair, Information Management Committee

This year the Information Management Committee is looking forward to this year's SAFE Symposium and is wanting to share your voice on our Social Media. If you or your company has something to share, please email us at info-mgt@safeassociation.com and we will get it posted! Please ensure that you include photos, and that your message is less than 200 words long.

We want to highlight your members, events, sponsorships, and products being showcased at the Symposium, so don't hesitate to send us your highest quality photos, logos, product info, etc. See you all in November!



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The Gentex PURSUIT™ Next Generation Fixed Wing Helmet Lighter. Stronger. Built for every mission.

Corporate News

As the world-leading provider of advanced headborne protection, Gentex understands that helmets are more than just equipment—they are essential to mission success and directly impact aircrew comfort, focus, and long-term health. For decades, the Gentex HGU-55/P and HGU-68/P have provided reliable protection for aircrew operating in demanding environments, but as mission requirements have grown so has the burden on aircrew who were forced to adapt to the added weight from the incorporation of night vision goggles (NVGs) and helmet mounted displays (HMDs). As a result, aircrew have endured increased neck strain and discomfort and have often required multiple helmets to meet an expanding set of mission requirements. Now Gentex delivers the next generation of advanced headborne protection: the PURSUIT helmet reduces weight, enhances comfort, and eliminates compromises, ensuring aircrew are equipped for today's missions and ready for the future.



The PURSUIT Advantage

Lightweight, adaptable, and mission-ready, the PURSUIT helmet delivers unmatched comfort and performance in a single, modular system that provides aircrew the ability to adapt to various mission requirements without sacrificing protection or performance and eliminates the need for multiple helmets, which means reduced cost, less gear to manage, and increased aircrew readiness and combat effectiveness.

Designed for Endurance, Comfort, and Performance

The PURSUIT helmet's advanced, lightweight carbon shell reduces neck and spine strain, significantly lowering the risk of short and long-term injuries from prolonged missions and high-G maneuvers. The enhanced ventilation system prevents heat buildup, and fire-resistant, moisture-wicking, high-performance comfort pads increase aircrew comfort and mission readiness during long-duration flights. The PURSUIT helmet's optimized balance and center of gravity, as well as its enhanced nape design, provide aircrew with a secure, stable fit that keeps the helmet in place during dynamic maneuvering in all HMD/NVG configurations. With four helmet sizes, the PURSUIT helmet delivers an optimal, out-of-the-box fit for more than 99% of aircrew, ensuring exceptional comfort and performance.

Mission-Ready and Future-Proof

The PURSUIT helmet isn't just built for today—it's engineered for the future. Fully compliant with USN and USAF performance standards, the PURSUIT helmet is designed with future warfighting requirements in mind. Gentex's Modular Open System Approach (MOSA) in our helmet system design allows for the seamless integration of current and future HMDs, as well as advanced communications systems and optical and respiratory protection, to provide adaptability, aircrew safety, and warfighting capability for decades to come.

For more than 75 years, Gentex has set the standard in aircrew protection, delivering combat-proven innovation to those who serve. The PURSUIT™ next generation fixed wing helmet isn't just a helmet—it's a tactical advantage.

Designed For Comfort. Built For Performance.

[Gentex Corporation Awarded Navy OTA for Next Generation Fixed Wing Helmet Program](#)

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SAFE Europe Symposium 2025

By Pete Marston | Chair, SAFE Europe Committee

The SAFE Europe Symposium took place in Houten, Utrecht in the Netherlands from 31st March to 2nd April 2025. The event welcomed 211 delegates from 19 countries, with a quarter of delegates current uniformed military personnel. 22 exhibitors showed off their latest technology in the exhibition hall, while a busy technical papers program featured 3 keynote presentations and 18 varied technical presentations across the 2 main days of the symposium. The SAFE Europe Symposium is run annually in early Spring, and generally alternates each year between the UK and central Europe. 2026 will be the 30th SAFE Europe Symposium, and it is provisionally planned to be in Glasgow from 23rd to 25th March 2026 – we hope to see you there!



Col Ted Meeuwssen, Royal Netherlands Air Force Commander of the Center for Man in Aviation (Keynote Speaker)



Lt Col Erik Frijters (left)
Session Chair,

Dr Kaj Gijsbertse (right)
(TNO) presenting



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